

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SCCT-02 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 AID-20 DRC-01

AF-10 /165 W

----- 011074

R 141030Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5484

INFO USINO ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2913

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS, XF

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSES MIDDLE EAST

BEIRUT PASS DAMASCUS

1. DURING CALL MAY 13 ON FONMIN CHATTI, HE SAID THAT FROM INFO AVAILABLE TO HIM, HE WAS BEGINNING HAVE RAY OF HOPE THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER MIGHT SUCCEED IN WORKING OUT DISENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL. CHATTI WAS IN DAMASCUS WEEK AGO (TUNIS 2725) AND AT THAT TIME WAS COMPLETELY PESSIMISTIC. THEN HE COULD SEE NO POSSIBLE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ISRAELI AND SYRIAN "PLANS"

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AS PRESENTED TO SECRETARY. MEANWHILE, WAR WAS GOING ON

AND THERE REAL DANGER THEN AND NOW OF ESCALATION. TODAY, WHILE HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT ADMIT TO BEING OPTIMISTIC, HE FELT THAT CHANCES FOR SUCCESS HAD GREATLY IMPROVED.

2. CHATTI TOLD OF IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING MOMENTUM GOING. HE FELT THAT EGYPT WAS ALREADY BEGINNING TO LOSE GROUND IN ARAB WORLD AND THAT PEOPLE WERE STARTING TO ASK WHY IT WAS THAT ONLY SYRIA WAS FIGHTING ISRAEL. IN HIS OPINION, IF DISENGAGEMENT PROVED NOT POSSIBLE, EGYPT WOULD HAVE INCREASING PROBLEMS WHICH IN TURN WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN MIDDLE EAST BROUGHT ABOUT BY EGYPT'S ORIGINAL WILLINGNESS NEGOTIATE. EGYPTIAN THINKING HAD CHANGED IN RECENT MONTHS, AS HAD SYRIAN (AS VOICED BY ASSAD). HE SAID ISRAELIS MUST ALSO CHANGE THEIR THINKING AND MUST FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT EGYPT WILL LOSE STILL MORE GROUND IF ISRAEL IS NOT WILLING TO CHANGE. USG SHOULD BE TELLING ISRAEL THIS FOR IF EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE WANES, LIKELIHOOD IS THAT PROSPECTS FOR PERMANENT PEACE AND STABILITY IN MIDDLE EAST WILL WANE ALONG WITH IT.
SEELYE

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NNN

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